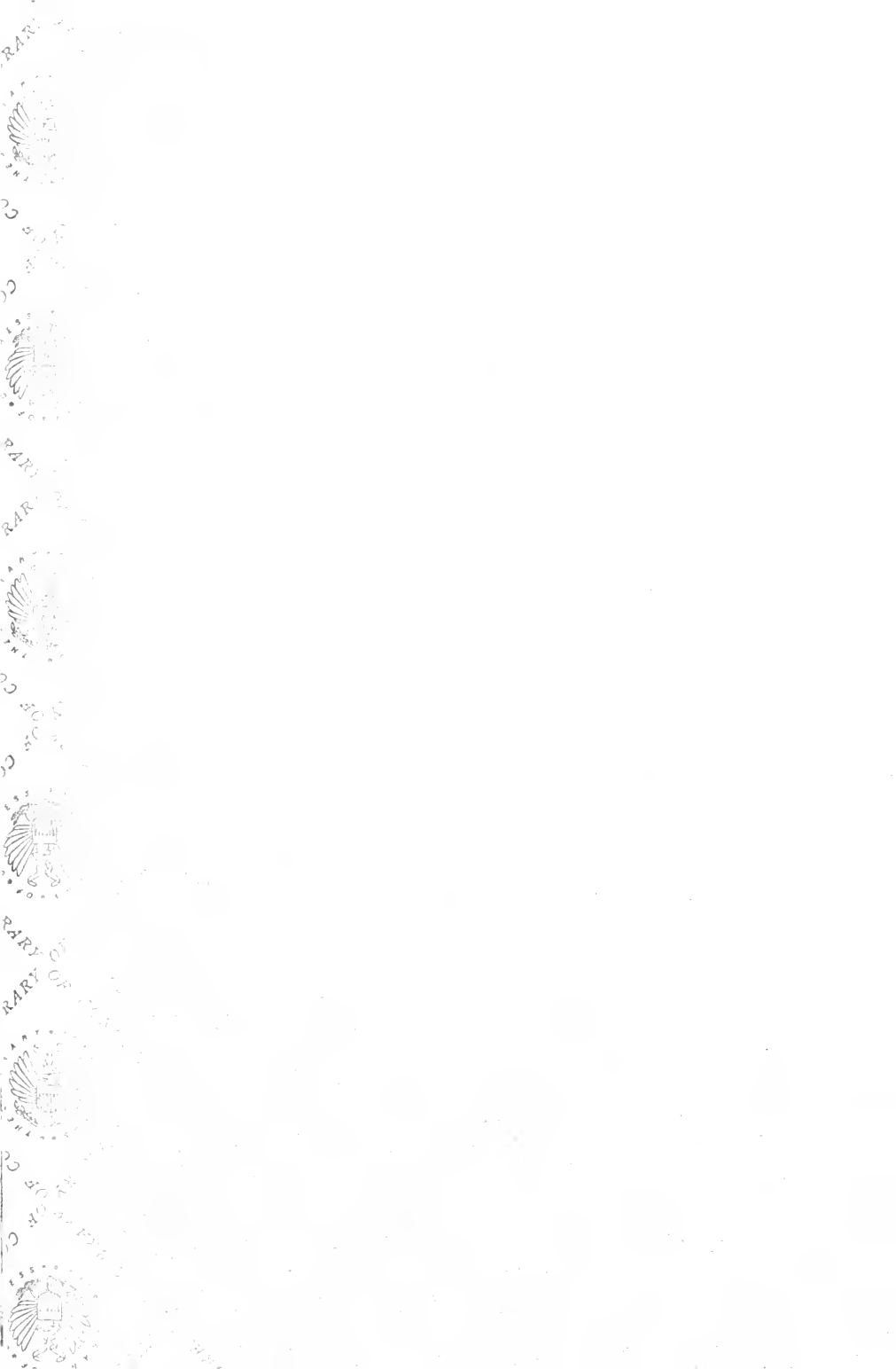


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CLASS POEM,

DELIVERED

IN THE UNIVERSITY CHAPEL,

JULY 14,

AT

THE VALEDICTORY EXERCISES

OF

THE CLASS OF 1835.

BY BENJAMIN DAVIS WINSLOW.

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1835.

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SONNET DEDICATORY.

TO THE MEMORY OF F. W. H.

WITH trembling notes I dedicate this lay,
Affection's gift at Memory's hallowed shrine,
To one, whose voice I trusted would combine
In sad adieus with ours this parting day, —
A voice hushed early on our toilsome way.
Yet, spirit blest of hardly mortal birth,
But for a moment lent to light our earth
With transient lustre, with a fleeting ray,
If thou canst hear us in that far-off land
Where human griefs obtrude not on thy bliss,
Descend to hover o'er this brother band,
Rendering more dear a hallowed hour like this;
Unseen, unknown, with angel accents swell
The solemn murmurs of our last farewell.

B. D. W.

CLASS POEM.

I.

AMID the wastes of Afric's burning sands,
Wearied and pale, the way-worn pilgrim stands,
Lingering with earnest gazings to explore
The dreary desert he has wandered o'er,
Recalling sorrows past, and bliss enjoyed,
With pleasures tempered, or with pangs alloyed, —
Dangers and trials, — sage instructors, — each
Able stern lessons to impart and teach,
And o'er the path as yet untracked to cast
Some little light reflected from the past ;
Then, bending onward, seeks with anxious gaze
To pierce the mists, the thickly gathered haze,
The lowering clouds, the shades of sombre hue,
Which veil the pregnant future from his view.

Behind, along the desert wastes, are seen
Some spots of verdure, decked with living green,
O'er which the leafy palm-trees wave, and spread
A grateful shade above the traveller's head ;
Some limpid founts, at whose refreshing spray
He quenched his thirst, and hied him on his way.
Beyond, with hopes of fancied joys to cheer,
Plains rife with beauty, glassy lakes appear,
And cities, crowned with domes and turrets, rise
In bold relief against the purple skies,

Whose thousand temples, bright in Orient gold,
 Undreamt of splendors to his sight unfold.
 Cheered with the prospect which before him lies,
 He grasps his staff, and on his journey hies.
 Poor, way-worn pilgrim! oft before deceived!
 Yet once again the *mirage* is believed;
 Its imaged beauty can those wastes beguile,
 Give birth to hopes, and waken many a smile, —
 Hopes, to be dashed, as all earth's hopes, with fears, —
 Smiles, to be dimmed, as all earth's smiles, by tears.
 Yes! he will wander in delusion on,
 Pursuing phantom pleasure, finding none,
 Deceived by every witching dream displayed,
 To charm the eye, and — only charming — fade;
 Until at last the evening clouds, uncurled,
 In mists and gloom enshroud the sleeping world;
 Then will the pilgrim, with a single sigh
 To vanished visions, lay him down — and die!

II.

Life is the desert, brothers! and to-day
 We are its pilgrims, pausing on our way,
 By retrospection to recall to mind,
 The verdant oases, we've left behind;
 The gushing fountains, where the limpid wave
 Oft, to the weary, kind refreshment gave;
 The hallowed spots, endeared till life shall end,
 By converse sweet with many a cherished friend;
 The happy hours, when hearts unseared by pain
 Lent life a bliss, it ne'er may know again.
 Ours, too, the pilgrim's task *beyond* to look,
 And scan the contents of that mystic book,

Whose pages dim record each varied fate,
That in the future doth our steps await.

Futurity ! by fancy painted bright
With tints of hope, it bursts upon the sight ;
The past ye heed not ! ye would onward press
To thread the mazes of yon wilderness ;
Since, though it beams through distant vistas fair,
At best a gilded desert opens there.
Yet to the fading *past* recur a while ;
We gaze not on the sun's departing smile,
Which lights the Occident, with less of sorrow,
That it will shine more brightly on the morrow.
Then from the joys the future has in store,
Turn we to those, — the lost for evermore ;
Lost, — save perchance when visions of the past,
Bright as a meteor, o'er the soul are cast,
Which for a transient moment serve to cheer,
Then, fading, leave it darker and more drear.

III.

Mine be the task, in unpretending rhyme,
To stay, an hour, the onward tide of time,
To faintly picture with a feeble hand
The varied fortunes of our little band ;
What storms we've weathered, save the hasty few,
Who, hurrying on, their journey soon got through ;
What angry tumults in these shades have stirred,
What wars were braved, or what wars' rumors heard ;
Mine too the task, — for once the curtain furled, —
To paint to life our little imaged world.

IV.

The passer-by, unskilled in ancient lore,
Whose hands the ribboned parchment never bore,

As from yon city, with a hurried tread,
 He hies to Auburn, Garden of the Dead,
 A moment pauses, bending glances fleet
 O'er these famed cloisters, Learning's chosen seat,
 And thinks all peace within this classic shade,
 All tumult absent, — passion all allayed; —
 Ah! little reck's he of the bustle, din,
 The angry tempests which oft rage within!
 Ah! little deems he, that in swelling pride,
 In bitter factions, potent to divide,
 In fierce ambition, — anger, — burning strife, —
 A world in miniature, this college life!
 Stranger! wouldst thou thy pleasing dreams discard?
 Walk in, and rove around the College Yard,
 To learn this lesson, — there's no spot on earth
 So blest to give not worldly passions birth.
 Alas! not e'en this consecrated place,
 Adorned by art's and nature's blended grace,
 Where sober Learning musing loves to stray,
 Is all exempt from Passion's lawless sway,
 Or transient grief, — or woes perchance more deep,
 Than elders deem in youthful breasts can sleep.
 And why? the heart is still the self-same thing, —
 Restless, — unsated, — ever on the wing, —
 The sport of pleasure, — and anon of pain,
 Lawless, — or wearing custom's gilded chain, —
 Guileless, — or seared by petty worldly art, —
 The same, strange, wild, mysterious human heart.
 Here too are nursed some fiery souls, — perchance
 Destined one day to shed a meteor glance,
 With transient beams the slumbering world to daze,
 Then, as the startled nations upward gaze,

To mark what genius comes to re-illumine
 Lost hope, — as others, — vanish to the tomb.
 Hence petty sorrows, troubles, vices, sin,
 These calm retreats of learning enter in ;
 And pardon, sage, if, one brief hour to cheer,
 I smile at follies which demand a tear.

V.

Ambition rules ! seest thou yon glimmering light,
 Dim twinkling through the shadows of the night ?
 What weary vigils doth yon watcher keep,
 When all around are wrapt in soothing sleep !
 Bends he like olden saints at midnight prayers ?
 Dear Sir, a moment scale those foot-worn stairs,
 And on the door with kindly caution rap,
 Lest thou shouldst spoil his drowsier neighbour's nap.
 Gaze in with wonder on the picture there !
 A youth, whose brow is stamped by early care,
 With spectacles perched up upon his nose,
 And drooping eyes, which Somnus fain would close,
 Pores o'er his books, and hopes to hit the mark
 By digging nightly into matters dark ;
 Ambition prompts him to his midnight toil,
 And urges Prudence to allow the oil.

Behold yon thing with nicely ordered curls,
 Arrayed in garments just sent out from Earl's,
 His pallid cheek with new-fledged whiskers rife,
 By famed Macassar hurried into life ;
 His pockets lined, — poor heir to thousand ills, —
 With Read's and Willard's long-unsettled bills,
 Which, unlike those that moneyed hands indite,
 Are never proffered payable at sight.

A troublous spirit reigns within his breast,
 Whose stormy workings yield no time for rest;
 The ruling passion which 't is his to know,
 Sleeping or waking, is *to make a show*.
 For this, he suffers precious hours to pass,
 Which, as they hasten, find him at the glass;
 For this, he strives with constant care to shine
 Above his comrades in his chosen line;
 For this behold him some ten minutes wait
 To come to Commons Hall or Chapel late;
 For this, all day he seeks the open air,
 For this, no torches from his casement flare,
 That he may give his fellows information
 He needs not study for his recitation;
 And yet, while toiling fashion to pursue,
 Panting to be esteemed a genius too,
 And fearful of the morrow's *scrow* or *dead*,
 Takes book and candle underneath his bed.

VI.

Earth has its trials, — founts of many a tear, —
 And Learning's sons are not more favored here,
 Since countless sorrows venture to invade
 The boasted bliss of Harvard's quiet shade.
 Ascend those stairs swept seldom by a broom,
 To view that haunt, a student's dusty room, —
 A scene where wonders to the sight unfold,
 In flowing verse, or fiction, never told,
 And vain are all the efforts of the pen,
 To paint to life the inmate and his den.
 Lo! tottering tables propped on crazy pegs,
 And limping chairs with amputated legs;
 Wardrobes and bureaus ranged along the wall,
 Which, like old Troy, are nodding to their fall;

Papers and books, — his college books, — which sleep
 In gathered dust some twenty inches deep ;
 Pictures, with smoke of vanished ages dark,
 That once adorned the cabin of the Ark ;
 Goblets with punch, or vile Madeira, stained,
 And long-necked bottles (need I mention ?) drained.
 Black walls above, and carpet worn below,
 Boots, hats, and garments, all complete the show.
 Upon yon sofa of uncertain strength,
 Appears the inmate stretched at easy length ;
 The smoke in wreaths ascending from his lips ;
 A cup, — which ever and anon he sips, —
 Reposing near him on that trembling stand,
 While Bulwer's last, uncut, is in his hand.
 The fire replenished, — trimmed the flickering light,
 He fondly hopes to pass a tranquil night.
 Alas, vain hope ! as e'en in worldly bliss,
 A college trouble comes to banish this.
 A rap ! a rap ! "Come in !" The open door
 Admits that worst of animals, — a bore.
 An embryo worldling, versed in earth's deceit,
 With bows and smiles he hastes the pest to greet,
 Receives his hat, conducts him to a chair,
 Then sits beside him, fixed in stern despair ;
 Hour after hour they drag away together,
 Of course conversing chiefly on the weather,
 Or, if they venture from that cherished theme,
 Few rays of fancy on their musings gleam,
 Save musty tales, or antiquated puns,
 And sage remarks on tailors, coats, and duns.
 How heavily the moments flit away !
 He stays and stays, and seems resolved to stay.

Hints fail, insinuations lose their power ;
 At length, long past the witching midnight hour,
 The inmate rises, — “ Sir, I must retire ;
 When you have done, put out my lamp and fire ! ”
 Oh ! *lengthy* visits, speeches, poems, all
 Protracted bores find place in college hall ;
 Oft to our ears, some spouter, — cruel fate !
Ad infinitum stories will relate ;
 Oft too, in youth untaught to mind his stops,
 Will rant until, exhausted quite, he drops ;
 And e'en the choir can fill us with alarm
 By swelling loud the Hundred Nineteenth Psalm,
 Or 'chance such fears the present hour attend,
 Lest my dull lay shall never find an end.

VII.

Nor deem these all the student's cares and pains ;
 E'en in the cloister Disappointment reigns,
 While empty promises, and hope deferred,
 Shed withering blight on hearts by passion stirred.
 Dost doubt the story ? then a moment pause,
 To mark the victims and inquire the cause.
 Hark to that plaudit wafted on the breeze,
 Shaking each hall, and murmuring through the trees !
 Again, again ! those thrilling shouts proclaim,
 Each lettered victor's now triumphant name ;
 While many a breast with joy is throbbing high,
 And flush of conquest lighteth many an eye.
 Yet turns he homeward with a heavy heart,
 Who in the matter hath no lot or part ;
 Vain are his weary vigils o'er the lamp,
 Which flickered faint in dews of midnight damp ;

Vain are his risings with the morning star,
 When yon old bell tolls heavily and far
 To rouse each sleeper from his couch to tread
 The Chapel chill, where matin song is said.
 But, baffled thus, not all extinguished hope,
 New paths of glory on his vision ope, —
 Paths which conduct away from cloister pale,
 To where the sun gleams o'er the snowy sail :
 A new ambition bids him strive to be
 Chief of that band who lord it o'er the sea,
 And, since his *fishing* on the land was vain,
 To try his luck upon the azure main.
 Nor all ; another instance meets the mind
 Of promise false and dull delay unkind ;
 Ah ! from the Syren in yon dusty bower,
 Who, fame reports, is gifted with the power,
 Like the good dame by Burns portrayed so true,
 "To make auld claihs look maist as weel as new," —
 When her we seek with rent, or button gone,
 (Marks by the Delta warriors often worn,)
 What sounds are wont our anxious ears to greet ?
 Nought but such words as breathe of promise sweet ;
 " Sir, ere elapse quite fifteen moments more,
 My page shall bring the garment to your door ;"
 Then, when some twenty suns their course have run,
 We 're answered, — " Yes, Sir, — it is almost done."

VIII.

O Muse untired ! yet further thou must trace
 The dwarfish faults of this else favored place.
 As in the world, dissemblers flourish here,
 Affecting, what they are not, to appear.

Gaze but for once ; amid that merry crowd,
 Where sounds of revel echo long and loud,
 And from the host surrounding, single him
 Who fills the sparkling goblet to its brim,
 Proclaims the pledge, and gayly lifting up,
 With shouts of laughter, drains the maddening cup.
 Ah ! did he dare, unmoved by fear of man,
 To follow out his own maturer plan,
 The midnight lamp and ancient book would be
 More joy to him than aught of revelry.

Change we the picture. Mark that roguish wight,
 Who boasts that knowledge is his sole delight,
 Who talks of science when he fain would chat
 Of riding, boating, any thing but that ;
 Who seeks the library with ambitious mind
 To get the biggest volumes he can find,
 And bid the record to his fellows speak,
 That he peruses Persian, Hebrew, Greek,
 Or dips for pleasure into Cherokee,
 And books whose names are all he dares to see ;
 Or, if he dares to scan such volumes deep,
 Bends o'er their lettered pages — fast asleep.

Behold yon stripling, boasting to despise
 Heaven's choicest gift, — the wisdom from the skies, —
 Who talks of reason with a knowing nod,
 And cries that Nature is the only God.
 The Book of Life he scorns, and trusts to gain
 More precious knowledge from Voltaire or Paine.
 The man, who studies with a soul sincere,
 Seeking the *truth* in reverential fear,
 And then *must* doubt, I pity, and would pray
 The Source of Truth to clear his doubts away ;

But for these urchins, who affect to spurn
 The truths they take no trouble to discern,—
 These new-fledged skeptics, hardly from the shell,
 The smile of scorn,—the rod,—they merit well.

There creeps along, in shrouding mantle hid
 His rosy cheeks, the college invalid,—
 Cheeks seldom fanned by those refreshing airs,
 Which breathe so soft at hour of morning prayers.
 'T is his to know each pang and dire disease
 That haunts poor flesh, fell foeman to its ease ;
 Disorders sad, which, all the patients say,
 Are wont to rage the most at dawn of day.
 But, ah ! upon the record soon appears
 Of matins missed, a bill of long arrears,
 And then he straight to some physician hies,
 Who his consumptive habit certifies ;
 Oh waste of pelf, and labor much amiss !
 The Commons' waiter could attest all this,
 And prove, e'en now, the fancied picture true,
 That Juvenal once painted to the view ;
 The sick man lies—the golden chord 'most snapt,
 And yet for food no hour is deemed more apt.

A college *friendship*,—on the self-same plan,
 In this we imitate developed man ;
 And friendship here, too oft a name I ween,
 Is rather hoped for, talked about, than seen ;
 'T is found convenient on the whole, 't is true,
 In most amusements to go two and two ;
 But ask, who may, that pair of friends, or that,—
 Termed by such holy name in common chat,—
 If they have known, or even care to know,
 Affection's genial, heavenly lighted glow,

Or felt that glorious blending into one
 Of brother hearts which throb in unison,
 That strong attachment — lasting, pure, and warm, —
 The same alike in sunshine and in storm,
 Unchanged — unchanging — with life's varying weather ;
 Not they, oh no! they *merely go together*.
 And if we point, as point we may this hour,
 At those who feel and own pure friendship's power,
 Who cling, as they will cling while life shall last,
 To fond attachment, offspring of the past,
 At college strengthened, or commenced at school,
 We sigh to think, "Exception proves the rule."

IX.

Thus have we seen the picture's darker side ;
 Yet, thanks to Heaven, a brighter is descried.
 Here, pulsate hearts with warm affection fired,
 Here, souls are found with noble thoughts inspired,
 That onward, upward, wing their fearless flight,
 Unmoved by fortune's smile or frown of blight ;
 Here many seek for wisdom, and with zeal
 Go forth her countless riches to reveal,
 And bid the light, which shone upon their birth,
 Illume the utmost regions of the earth ;
 Here joys exist, too unalloyed and pure
 In life's polluted pathways to endure ;
 Here hopes arise, — too promising to last,
 Hopes — joys, which now must constitute our *past*.

X.

Lo! where the past — the shadowy past — appears,
 With all the fading memories of years !

It is a stream, whose course no power can check,
 Which hurried downward many a shattered wreck,
 Where bubbles broke, and fragile barks were tost,
 Or in the deep abyss were sadly lost.

On India's streams, when shadows hover dark,
 Is often seen the little Maldivè bark,
 With roses decked, from which a single light
 Gleams faint and far amid the gloom of night;
 Sped by some love-lorn maiden from the shore,
 The weary waste of waters to explore,
 While she stands gazing from the river bank,
 To watch her beacon in the night-dews dank.
 If, while the boat's in sight, the torch shall burn,
 It tokens well her absent one's return;
 But, if the waves destroy the transient glow
 Of that frail lamp, it omens death and woe.
 So pause we, musing o'er the past, — the tide
 Whereon we launched our fortune-barks to glide,
 Lighted with hope; in most the lamp expired,
 And with it all the spirit then desired;
 In some it burned, — and to the favored few
 Far o'er the wave its beams of promise threw.

The shadowy past! the present! ah, how changed,
 Hearts, hopes, and all, since first these haunts we ranged,
 And felt our pulses throb as fresh and free,
 As in the days of careless infancy!
 We wandered then in Fancy's radiant bowers,
 Deeming a fairy universe was ours;
 No griefs had then impressed the open brow,
 No selfish cares had scared the heart, — as now;
 The warm affections from their fountains gushed,
 Freer than ever mountain torrent rushed.

Those happy, careless boyhood's hours are gone!
 Soon on each brow will grief's deep trace be worn,
 And in the heart, ere long, the world begin
 Its work of sorrow, selfishness, and sin.

XI.

Yes! even here change sets its mark on all;
 Fashions and friendships have their rise and fall;
 The corded crow's-feet, and the collar square,
 The change and chance of earthly lot must share;
 One thing alone, for better or for worse,
 Which knows no *change*, and that — a student's purse.

Old Rome hath fallen, and the lisping boy
 Cries *Ilium fuit*, when he speaks of Troy,
 And Harvard's sons for honors lost repine,
 Which crowned their mother in the days "lang syne."
 That martial band 'neath waving stripes and stars
 Inscribed alike to Mercury and Mars,
 Those gallant warriors in their dread array,
 Who shook these halls, — oh! where alas are they?
 Gone! gone! and never to our ears shall come
 The sounds of fife and spirit-stirring drum;
 That war-worn banner slumbers in the dust,
 Those bristling arms are dim with gathering rust;
 That crested helm, — that glittering sword, — that plume
 Are laid to rest in reckless faction's tomb.
 Gone too, for aye, that merry masquerade,
 Which danced so gayly in the evening shade,
 And Learning weeps, and Science hangs her head
 To mourn, — vain toil! — their cherished offspring dead.
 What though she sped her honors wide and far,
 Hailing as son, Muscovia's haughty Czar,

Who in his palace humbly knelt to greet,
 And laid his costly presents at her feet?
 Relentless fate her sudden fall decreed,
 Dooming each votary's tender heart to bleed,
 And yet, as if in mercy to atone,
 That fate hushed sighs, and silenced many a *groan*.

“New brooms sweep clean”; 't was thine, dear Goody Morse,
 To prove the musty proverb hath no force,
 Since fifty years to vanished centuries crept,
 While thy old broom our cloisters duly swept;
 All changed but thee! beneath thine aged eye
 Whole generations came and flitted by,
 Yet saw thee still in office; — e'en reform
 Spared thee the pelting of its angry storm.
 Rest to thy bones in yonder church-yard laid,
 Where thy last bed the village sexton made!

One form we miss, — one honored form, — to-day;
 Of him who led us once o'er learning's way
 To Græcia's glorious lore, and often strewed
 With jest and pun the somewhat toilsome road; —
 Gone from these haunts, on earth he lingers yet,
 Calmly awaiting till life's sun shall set.
 Long live in blest retirement, old sage!
 To bend delighted o'er some ancient page;
 Long may thy midnight lamp in splendor burn;
Sero in cælum! late to heaven return.

Gone from our record many a cherished name
 Of old companions who remembrance claim,
 And feel, though fate has strangely changed their lot,
 They would not be this moment all forgot.
 With us they left the cherished household hearth,
 To wander on o'er learning's verdant path,

And now where are they? some on ocean's surge,
 Where moaning breeze, with breakers' startling dirge,
 Steals harshly on the sea-boy's dreamy slumbers,
 Or wildly mingles with his oft-told numbers;
 Some toil and moil in Mammon's crowded marts,
 Where thirst for gold sears intellects and hearts;
 And some this hour are gathered here, and find,
 Though out of sight, they were not out of mind,
 Since smiles of welcome, with extended hand,
 Hail them true *members* of our brother band.

In fancy, too, I seek the gathering gloom
 Where sorrow hovers o'er the sick man's room,
 Steal to his side with softly echoed tread,
 And linger round our dying classmate's bed.
 Gaze on him there! — how changed from days gone by,
 Wasted the form, and dim the once bright eye;
 The dews of death are cold upon his brow;
 And yet his spirit seeks old Harvard now,
 With ours his trembling tones to sadly blend
 In last adieus to every long-loved friend;
 Trusting, while tossing on his bed of pain,
 From which, alas! he ne'er may rise again,
 Some friendly eye has dropped one burning tear,
 Some voice has murmured, "Would that he were here!"
 Brother! e'en now God bless the healing cup,
 And raise thee from thy couch of anguish up;
 Or, if for thee he marks another plan,
 And would abridge life's transitory span,
 Bidding thee cease o'er dreary earth to roam,
 Then lend thee wings to waft thee to his home.

So o'er us change hath passed with chilling breath,
 Nor all unknown the ravages of death.

The loved, — the lost, — we name him not to-day,
 In sorrowing strains of heartfelt grief to pay
 Fond memory's tribute to departed worth;
 We but invoke him to descend to earth,
 And here, unseen, with angel accents swell
 The solemn murmurs of our last farewell.
 Peace to his ashes, mingling with the sod!
 Bliss to his spirit, gone, we trust, to God!

XII.

The past, the past, how many dreams it brings
 Of joys and pleasures, — now remembered things, —
 Of merry banquet, when the festal cup
 By friendship's hand was gayly lifted up;
 Of cherished ties that fettered heart to heart,
 In strong attachments which death cannot part;
 Of evening walk where waving tree-tops close
 Above the sleepers in their long repose;
 Of pensive musings 'neath the leafy bowers
 In yon fair garden decked with graves and flowers;
 Of converse gay around the hearth-stone warm,
 When howled, without, the raging winter storm;
 Of music soft in stilly summer night,
 When the old green shone fair in Dian's light, —
 Hark! hark! the dying echoes of the strain,
 As if in pity, gently swell again:

Hast e'er seen old Harvard some calm summer eve,
 When the last fading smiles of the lingering day
 Glimmered bright o'er her turrets, in sorrow to leave
 One glance of regret ere it vanished away?

We have seen! we have seen! and remember how oft,
 When twilight or moonbeams shed light on the scene,
 Would the murmurs of music rise tranquil and soft
 From the lutes, or the voices, which rang from the green.

For us they have vanished — that twilight — that strain;
 Yet often that spirit, which never can die,
 Shall awaken the notes of the music again,
 And fancy the tints of the soft summer sky.

And though far — far distant our footsteps must rove,
 When grey evening its mantle the world spreadeth o'er,
 We shall think, Doth the melody stir in the grove,
 Whose breathings our bosom can echo no more?

But pauseless Time sweeps onward, and destroys
 All but the memory of such cherished joys,
 And we must hasten from these haunts serene
 To cares and toils of earth's unquiet scene;
 Yet when, in hours of retrospective thought,
 Such visions rise with fond remembrance fraught,
 When joyous banquet, song, and wine, and dance,
 With music's swell, and beauty's melting glance,
 And friendship's smiles, which light the festal bower,
 Have for a moment lost their magic power;
 When, with the present wearied, Memory strays
 Back to the scenes and friends of earlier days,
 When the seared heart, by stormy passions tost,
 Turns, from its living joys, to pleasures lost,
 And in its transient restlessness would fain
 Exchange them all for one it cannot gain;
 Our boyhood's home the mental eye shall see,
Then, then old Harvard! we will think on thee!

And if, when life is in its evening grey,
 When the last sands ebb rapidly away,
 Some lingering few, — the remnant of our band, —
 Shall meet to grasp once more the friendly hand,
 With heart o'erflowing and with glistening eye,
 One cup they 'll pour to Alma Mater high,
 And one to those who yet life's pathways tread,
 And one — the last — the saddest — to the dead.

XIII.

Our Alma Mater! lives a son of hers,
 Within whose breast no warm emotion stirs,
 Whose heart leaps not at mention of the name,
 Embalmed by learning and consigned to fame!
 Our Alma Mater! whom to-day we grieve,
 With sorrow deep and true regret, to leave;
 Much hast thou done for us thy sons, and we,
 Oh! can we proffer no return to thee,
 Or, for the stores of knowledge carried hence,
 No offering yield of grateful recompense?
 At least, for thee our heartfelt prayers we 'll breathe,
 That laurels green thy time-worn brows may wreath,
 That an old age of usefulness be thine,
 By offspring cheered, a long and honored line;
 And stars shall fade and suns for ever set,
 Ere we thy countless benefits forget.
 Rise to the heavens in pomp, majestic dome,
 To crown her altars, — to adorn her home,
 And, as the burning beacon from the mount,
 Point to the pilgrim Learning's open fount!
 Leap, marble, from the quarry to embalm
 Her gathered treasures from each future harm,

And give to others, since our course is o'er,
 Her riches culled from Learning's varied lore.
 Our course is o'er! words uttered not to please,
 And we must turn to other scenes than these!

XIV.

The distant future! brothers, not for me
 Its vistas ope; — One Eye alone can see,
 Alone can pierce the thickly gathered shade,
 The mists and gloom which coming years pervade.
 Yet would I lift, as man may lift, the veil,
 Which hides from sight its visions dim and pale,
 And bid to view the thousand paths be spread,
 Whose devious ways our feet henceforth must tread.
 The hour has come, when from this quiet home
 Ye must go forth, ye know not where, to roam;
 As erst to those, earth's wandering parent pair,
 When sadly banished from the garden fair,
 For them thenceforth by sin and sorrow curst,
 New spheres of action on your vision burst;
 "The world is all before you, where to choose,"
 With all that man may gain, or fear to lose;
 With glittering prizes o'er the distance strewn,
 Prizes which anxious toil may make your own.
 Wealth, — rank, — and power, — an everlasting name,
 Appear to tempt ambition's lordly aim,
 And all the honors worldlings ever ask,
 To prompt to labor, and to crown the task.
 Yet not for these, — oh! labor not for these,
 Vain, fleeting things, which but the fancy please.
 For higher, nobler, better treasures toil,
 Which blighting time can never make his spoil.

The miser's hoard, the monarch's transient sway,
 A pompous epitaph, — oh what are they
 Compared with all those lasting pleasures stored,
 To be at length the good man's rich reward?

Then to the stage of action onward press
 Your fellow men to benefit and bless;
 To bid the light, — the day-spring from on high, —
 Break in more clear to every darkened eye,
 Shine on the monarch in his princely lot,
 And cheer the peasant by the humble cot;
 To heal, — at least to soothe with tender care, —
 The thousand pangs to which poor flesh is heir;
 To bind, — as man may bind, — the broken heart,
 With gentle pity's sympathetic art;
 The poor, the weak, the helpless to defend,
 And plead their cause who have no other friend.
 Yours be such honest, honored toils, and yours
 The rich reward that evermore endures.
 Then if for you no sculptured marble rise
 In bold relief against the azure skies;
 If pompous dirge, with swelling trump of fame,
 Forget your deeds and titles to proclaim,
 Still shall the *good* long treasure up your worth,
 Embalm your names and memories green on earth,
 And say, — if e'er some future age demands,
 What thoughts and actions claimed your hearts and hands; —
 “They hoped not, wished not, labored not, to write
 Their names in deathless characters of light,
 Amid the few who deck the blazoned scroll
 That Fame preserves her votaries to enroll.
 No! theirs the aim, throughout life's fleeting span,
 To aid, improve, exalt, enlighten man;

Yet, while they labored for another's soul,
 O'er their own spirits learned to keep control.
 Their names are now inscribed in letters fair
 Upon the book of life, — to shine for ever there ! ”

XV.

The hour has come ! and to the favoring gale
 With fearless heart expand the snowy sail,
 And launch your barks upon the foaming ocean
 Whose waves beneath you bound in playful motion, —
 Yet learn, young wanderers on the sea of life,
 With what of joy or grief the way is rife ;
 The raging winds will sometimes wake the deep,
 When calm and tranquil as an infant's sleep ;
 There may be sunshine, — yet the tempest cloud
 The brightest day in darkness can enshroud ;
 There *must* be storms, yet only storms can show
 The sign of hope, — heaven's promise-beaming bow.
 Yet, rest the billows in untroubled calm,
 To lull to sleep stern Caution's due alarm,
 Or rush they madly on to overwhelm
 The sinking bark, — set Reason at the helm,
 And upward gaze, to where, through storm-clouds riven,
 The star of Faith beams down, in mercy given
 To guide the wanderer o'er the stormy sea, —
 The only light-house of his destiny ; —
 Or rage the waters in their angry play,
 When passion's whirlwind holds terrific sway,
 Seek for that voice to breathe through tempests chill
 With words of mercy, — “ Billows, peace — be still ! ”

But onward now ! and through the dashing surge,
 With buoyant hopes, the straining vessel urge !

And grant, kind Heaven! when all the storms are o'er,
 That we may meet on that celestial shore,
 That wished-for haven of eternal rest
 Where all the good — and *but* the good — are blest,
 Laved by the waters of that halcyon sea
 Whose billows sleep, and sleep eternally.

XVI.

Brothers! my task is done, — and almost ended,
 The idle breathings of my tedious lay,
 Yet thrilling thoughts, with recollections blended
 Of by-gone times, have gathered fast to-day, —
 Thoughts, recollections, which to strive to stay
 Were vain in breasts with such emotions stirred,
 As wake in ours, while lingering to say,
 With trembling tones and throbbing hearts, the word,
 The long, the last farewell, which must this hour be heard.

Four weary years we 've journeyed on together
 Beneath existence' ever-varied sky,
 In storm and tempest, or in sunny weather,
 And shall we — *can* we part without a sigh?
 Or coldly rend each deeply cherished tie,
 Or leave these scenes without one fond regret
 For hopes and joys for ever flitted by,
 Whose beams, in deepening twilight, linger yet,
 To cheer with parting radiance, — though their sun hath set?

As strangers met we, and we part as brothers,
 With kindly words and friendly wishes told,
 To seek the world, — to form new ties with others, —
 Yet not forgetting those which bound of old;

And though we press with spirits free and bold,
Pursuing earthly phantoms, deathless fame,
Rank, lordly sway, or glittering heaps of gold,
Yet ever shall a classmate, — cherished name, —
Find friendly hearts and hands, and warm remembrance claim.

But the last note is hastening to expire,
And fainter, fainter, breathes each dying strain ;
Yet ere I cease to touch my feeble lyre,
Ere yet we leave this consecrated fane,
I must sweep o'er its trembling chords again ;
One word, but one, remaineth now to tell,
One thought within us stirs, — a thought of pain,
One sound alone our blended voices swell,
That word, that thought, that sound, to each and all, Farewell !

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